

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARC BROWARD Nominated for United States Secretary of Labor's "Freedom Initiative Award"

Sunrise, FL — The Electronics Recycling Program at ARC Broward has been nominated for the US Secretary of Labor's "Freedom Initiative Award" by Brandon Macsata of the Macsata-Kornegay Group.

The Secretary of Labor's New Freedom Initiative Award annually recognizes non-profits, small businesses, corporations and individuals that have demonstrated exemplary and innovative efforts in furthering the employment and workplace environment for people with disabilities.

The Electronics Recycling Program at ARC Broward demonstrates the goals of the New Freedom Initiative by providing a full continuum of services and opportunities designed to provide training, skills, assistance and opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to work in community integrated settings and have the broadest range of choices possible in doing so.

When creating the Electronic Recycling Program, ARC Broward sought to provide opportunities that were different than typically available job opportunities in food service, and janitorial sectors, among others. "We brainstormed and researched many possibilities before identifying the emerging industry of electronics recycling," said Dennis Haas, President/Ceo of ARC Broward. The organization was able to obtain a contract with the Broward County Resource Recovery system to collect and recycle all residential and small business electronics equipment to divert them from the general waste stream. Computers, cell phones, TV's, copiers, printers, etc. are collected by ARC Broward staff with and without disabilities out in the community, thus promoting an integrated work setting for individuals with disabilities residing in Broward County.

The donated electronics items are then processed by individuals with disabilities who are trained in how to perform multiple aspects of the work (taking computers apart, rebuilding, repackaging cabling, sorting, community pick ups and interactions with customers, testing monitors, etc.). As the program matures as a business, so does the diversity of this work and training. Individuals – both with and without disabilities – are

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building experience to reflect on their resumes, as well as learning valuable skills. ARC Broward's employment services team identifies job opportunities relevant to the skills and experience gained by those working in ARC Broward's electronics recycling program/service.

ARC Broward initiated this program/service approximately three years ago. It is employing 150 individuals with disabilities and 80 have undergone specific assessment experiences in an effort to identify an appropriate aspect of the business that they wish to learn. Twenty-five (25) individuals are currently working in the electronics recycling business at varying levels, earning approximately \$10.00 per hour with health insurance and paid time-off.

In addition, ARC Broward's Job Developers are also developing a database of employers whose businesses have relevant need for individuals with the type of skills required in electronics recycling.

Recipients of the "Freedom Initiative Award" will be announced in October.

"ARC Broward has a long and proven track record of innovative approaches to integrating children and adults with disabilities into the greater South Florida community," summarized Brandon M. Macsata, Managing Partner of The Macsata-Kornegay Group, Inc., who submitted the nomination. "The Electronics Recycling Program moves beyond providing the traditional food service and lawn maintenance jobs to workers with disabilities, and offers a unique opportunity to learn advanced skills to better prepare them for the competitive workplace. The service is only one of a handful in the nation, so it only made sense to nominate them for the New Freedom Initiative Award."

The Macsata-Kornegay Group, Inc. is a national firm specializing in providing a litany of professional services to community, non-profit organizations.

For more information, including where to bring electronic materials for recycling and types of materials accepted, call (954) 746-9400, or go to www.arcbroward.com. ARC Broward is a private, not-for-profit organization providing supports and assistance primarily to children and adults with Mental Retardation, Autism, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, and other developmental disabilities. Incorporated in 1956, ARC Broward provides a continuum of supports to more than 1,200 children and adults with disabilities and employs a caring team of more than 350 health-care, educational, and other professionals.

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